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# ENERGON UNIVERSE

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ALIAS

# SCARLETT

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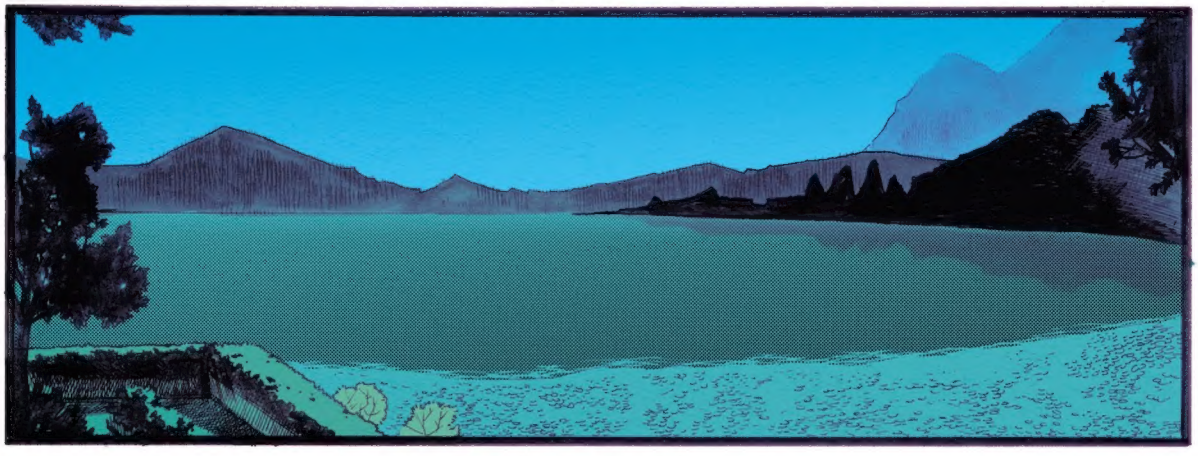
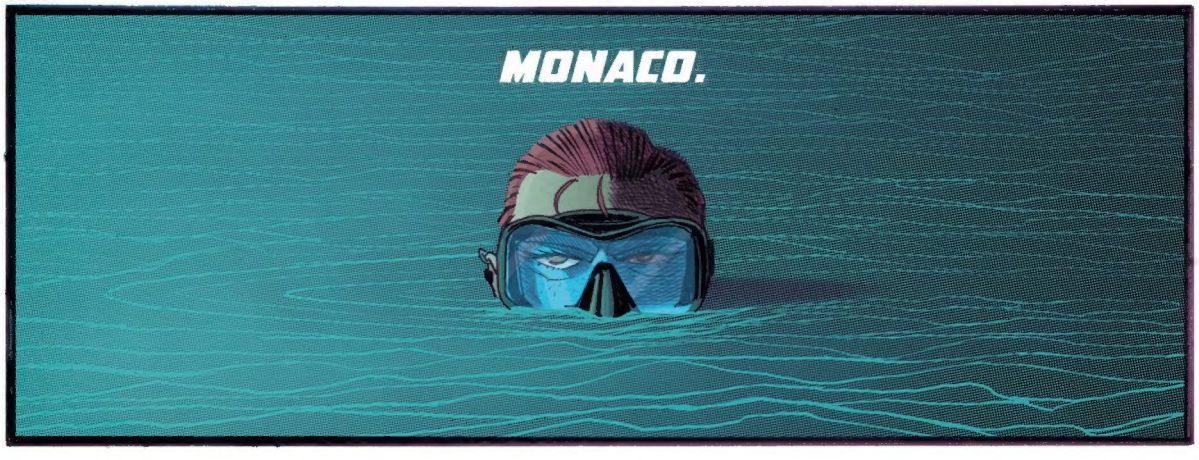


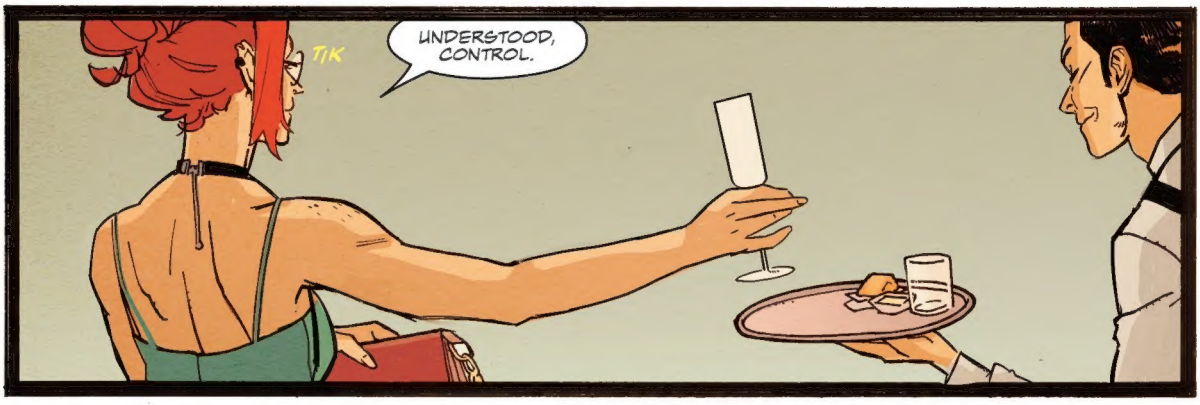

MONACO.

ZIIIP

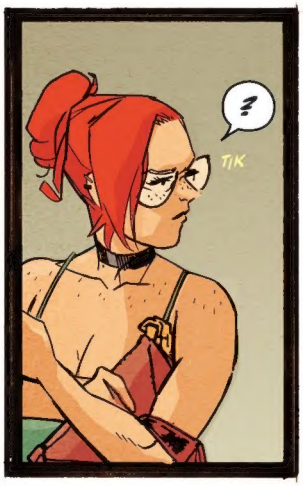
CH-CHLICK

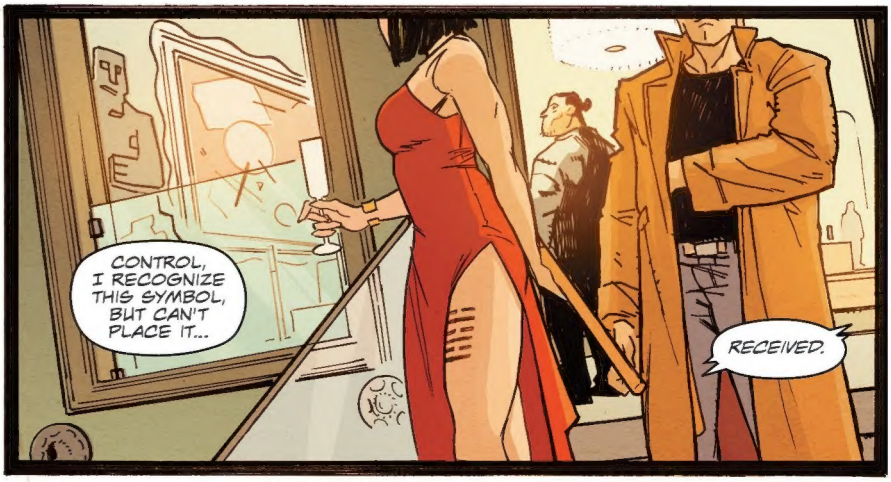
SCARLETT IN POSITION.
TIK
COPY THAT, AGENT.
SECURITY IS... EXTREMELY HEAVY. ARE WE CERTAIN THE HOSTAGES ARE NOT ON SITE? COULD THIS BE THE ACTUAL BUY?

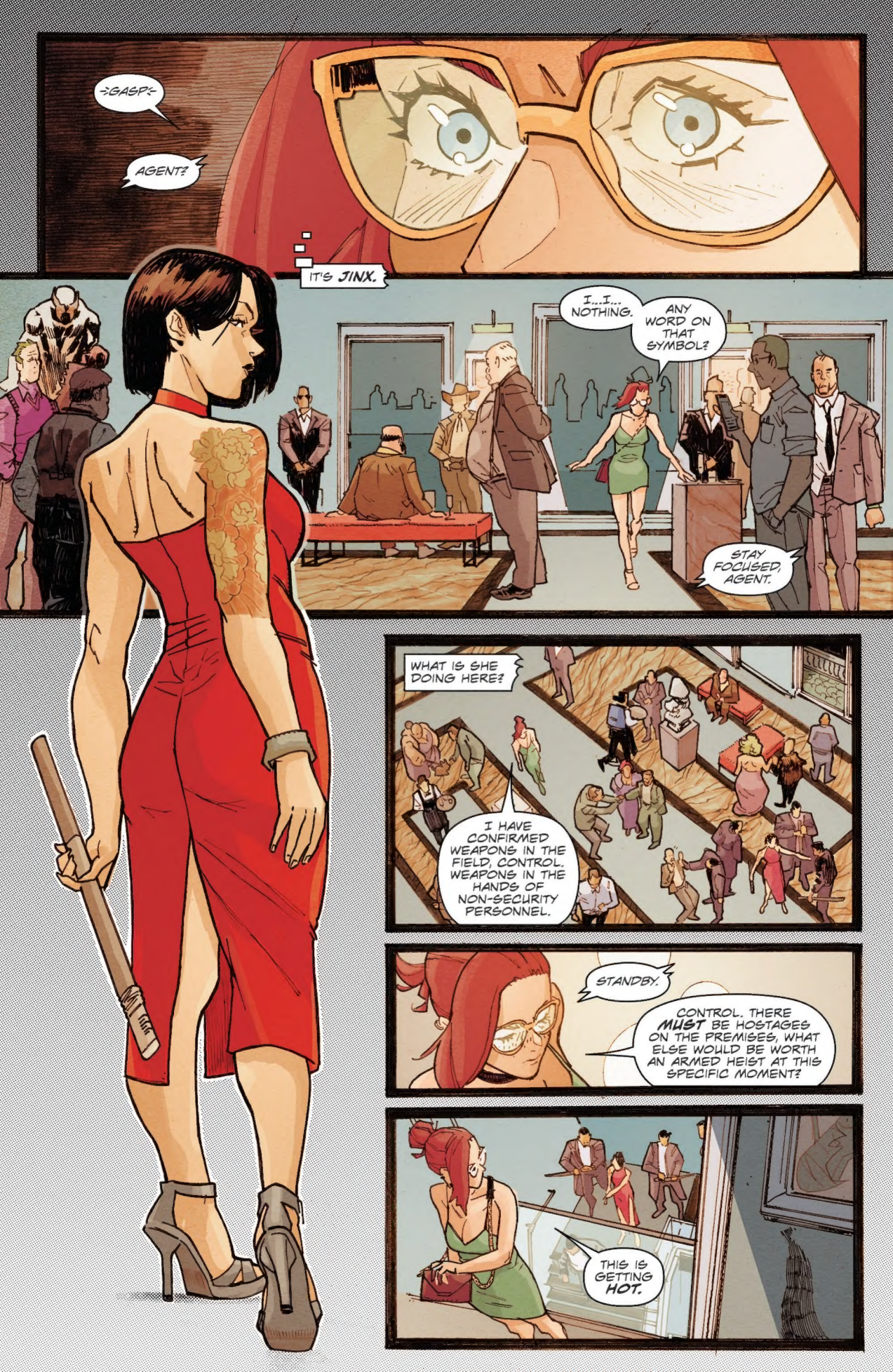
INTEL SAYS NO. BUT EVEN IF THE ASSETS WERE ON SITE, AGENT, THAT'S NOT YOUR PURVIEW.
YOU'RE THERE TO GATHER EVIDENCE AND CONFIRM BUYERS, IF POSSIBLE. INVESTIGATION, **NOT** ENGAGEMENT.


TIK
UNDERSTOOD, CONTROL.

BUYER **"BARTLEBY"**, IDENT CONFIRMED.
COPY THAT.


?
TIK


CONTROL, I RECOGNIZE THIS SYMBOL, BUT CAN'T PLACE IT...
RECEIVED.


=GASP=
AGENT?
IT'S JINX.
I...I... NOTHING.
ANY WORD ON THAT SYMBOL?
STAY FOCUSED, AGENT.
WHAT IS SHE DOING HERE?
I HAVE CONFIRMED WEAPONS IN THE FIELD, CONTROL. WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF NON-SECURITY PERSONNEL.
STANDBY.
CONTROL. THERE MUST BE HOSTAGES ON THE PREMISES, WHAT ELSE WOULD BE WORTH AN ARMED HEIST AT THIS SPECIFIC MOMENT?
THIS IS GETTING HOT.

I HAVE A MINIMUM OF FIVE NEW PLAYERS. ALL ARMED.
WHATEVER THIS IS, JINX DOESN'T WANT ME IN IT.
TIK
I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN HONOR THAT.
CONTROL. THIS JUST BECAME A BRAWL. PERMISSION TO ENGAGE?
DENIED. WE ARE NOT AUTHORIZED FOR ENGAGEMENT.
LOT 10
LOT 31
39

UH-HUH.
KRAK
CONTROL. HOSTAGES ARE NOW LOOSE AND RUNNING AROUND THE PARTY LIKE CHICKENS WITH THEIR HEADS CUT OFF.
DO WE STILL WANT TO STICK WITH "INTEL SAYS THEY'RE NOT HERE", OR WE WANNA REVISE THAT?
STANDBY.
PERMISSION TO ENGAGE!
NEGATIVE.

THIS IS A FACT-FINDING MISSION **ONLY.** GET INTEL ON BUYERS AND ANY ASSETS THEY'RE TRYING TO MOVE.
UNDERSTOOD.
BOOM
WE HAVE NO AUTHORIZATION TO ENGAGE.
SO YOU SAID.
FWIP
REPEAT, WE HAVE NO AUTHORIZATION TO ENGAGE.
GOT IT.

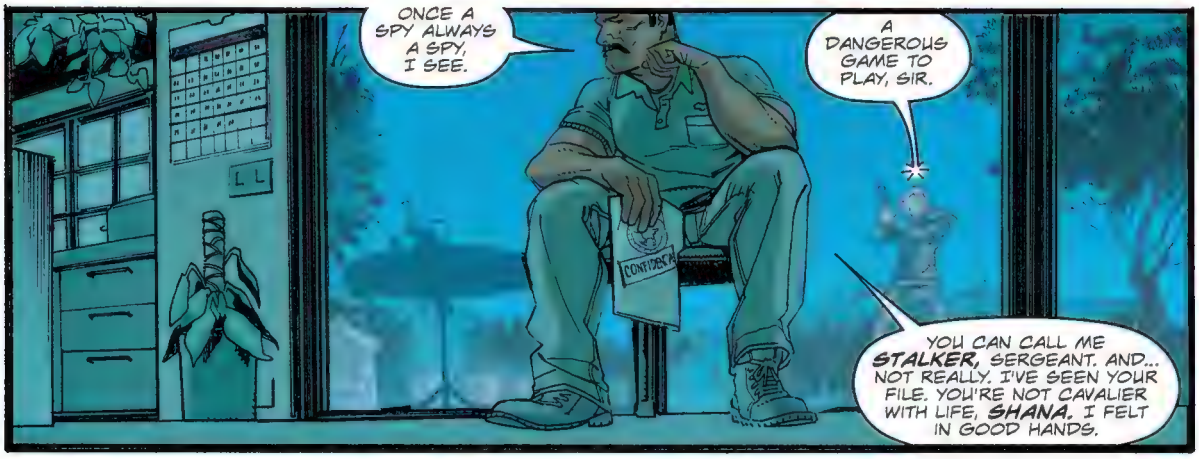
THNK
ARGGGH!
YOUR MISSION PARAMETERS HAVE NOT CHANGED, AGENT.
THAT SMILE... THERE SHE IS.
I HOPE THAT WASN'T A HUGE MISTAKE.

CONTROL, THE MISSION PARAMETERS MAY NOT HAVE CHANGED, BUT THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND CERTAINLY HAS.
THAT'S UNACCEPTABLE. YOUR--
CONTROL. I HAVE HOSTAGES, AND I'M READY FOR EVAC.
...
HEY. YOU'RE HIRED HELP, THERE'S NO REASON YOU HAVE TO DIE.
EXCELLENT. THANK YOU. NOW ZIP TIE YOURSELF, PLEASE.
ZZZPPPP
CONTROL. I HAVE TWELVE HOSTAGES-- NINE CONFIRMED AS OUR AMERICAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS. ALL ALIVE AND READY FOR EXTRACTION.
EN ROUTE.
YEAH. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
--CAUSED AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT THAT WILL TAKE WEEKS TO CLEAN UP. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO OFFER IN YOUR DEFENSE?
NO, SIR.
"NO, SIR", WHAT?! I CAN ALWAYS HEAR THE "BUT" WITH YOU, O'HARA. WHAT SMART-ASS THING DO YOU HAVE TO SAY TODAY, SOLDIER?!
I SUPPOSE I WOULD ASK HOW THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES FEEL ABOUT BEING HOME, INSTEAD OF US COMING HOME WITH INTEL ON WHERE THEY WERE GOING TO BE...SIR.
SO THIS OUTFIT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU? AM I PICKING UP WHAT YOU'RE PUTTING DOWN?
NO, SIR. BUT I ADMIT I'D LIKE TO BE MORE PROACTIVE.
WELL, YOU CAN PROACTIVE-ATE RIGHT OUT OF MY UNIT, SOLDIER. I BELIEVE YOUR CONTRACT IS UP FOR RENEWAL ANYWAY.
YES, SIR.
GET OUT OF MY DAMN OFFICE.
GODDAMN GORMAN.

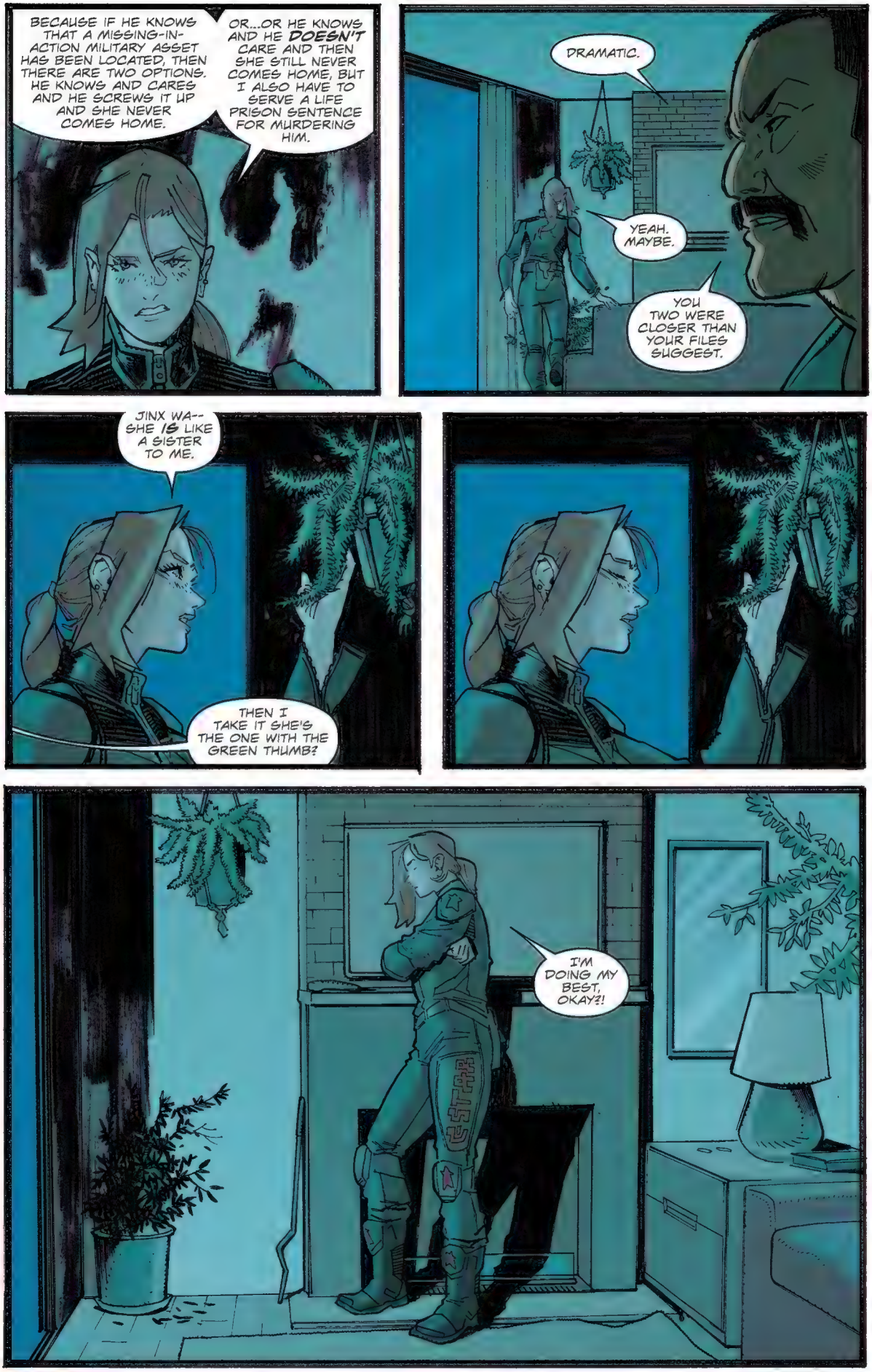
hug! me
IT'S NOT JINX. SHE WOULDN'T BREAK THE TAPE.
STAR

MYSTERY GUEST. UNDOUBTABLY MILITARY. BUT WHAT ELSE?


ONCE A SPY ALWAYS A SPY, I SEE.
A DANGEROUS GAME TO PLAY, SIR.
YOU CAN CALL ME STALKER, SERGEANT. AND... NOT REALLY. I'VE SEEN YOUR FILE. YOU'RE NOT CAVALIER WITH LIFE, SHANA. I FELT IN GOOD HANDS.

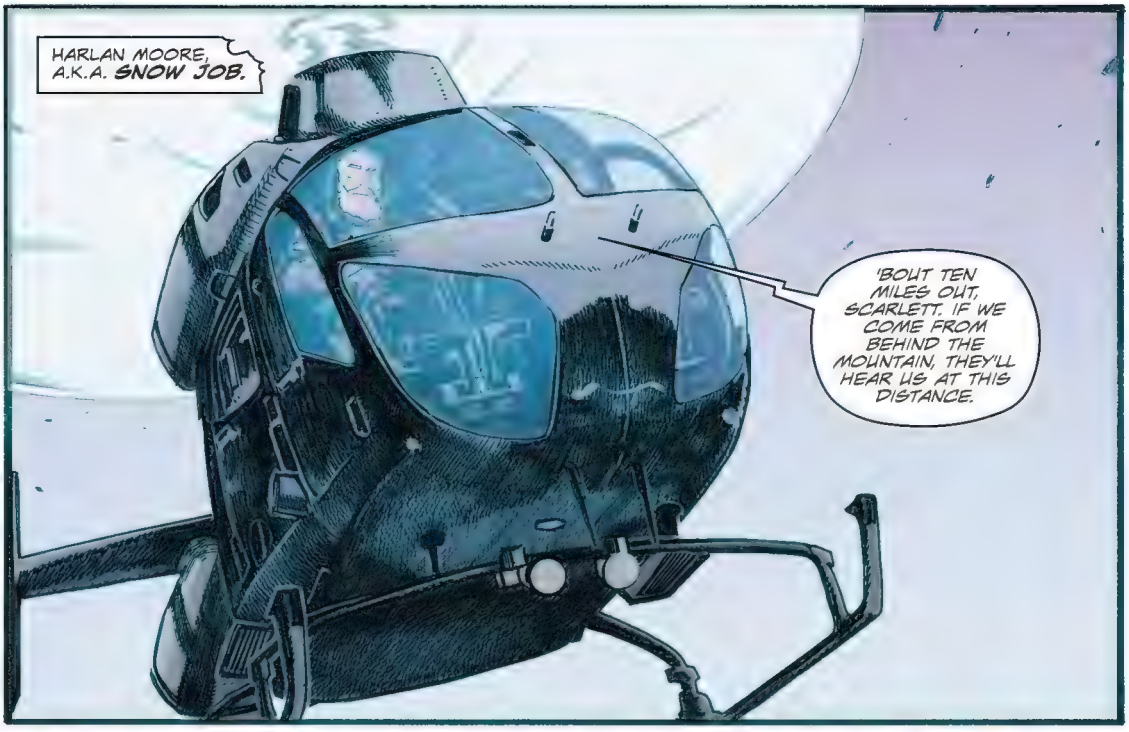
AH. SO IT'S A TEST THEN. IT ALWAYS IS. I DON'T KNOW WHY I BOTHER BEING SURPRISED. BUT TO WHAT END, SIR?
YOU DIDN'T SHARE EVERYTHING WITH YOUR C.O., DID YOU, SHANA?

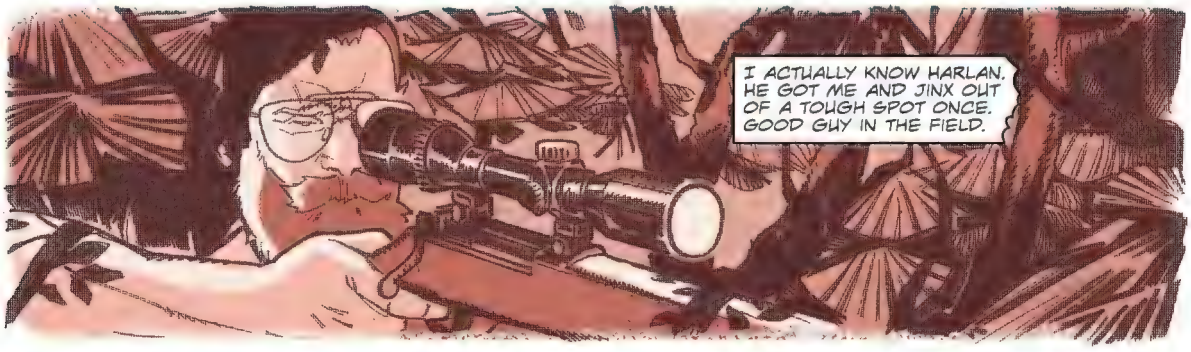
MY REPORT WAS COMPREHENSIVE.
BUT YOU KNEW GORMAN WOULD MISS THE FINER POINTS, BECAUSE THAT'S WHO HE IS.
OKAY. SO WHAT NOW?
MY QUESTION IS, WHY?
WHY DID YOU HOPE GORMAN WOULD BE SLOPPY AND LAZY AND MISS THESE SYMBOLS?

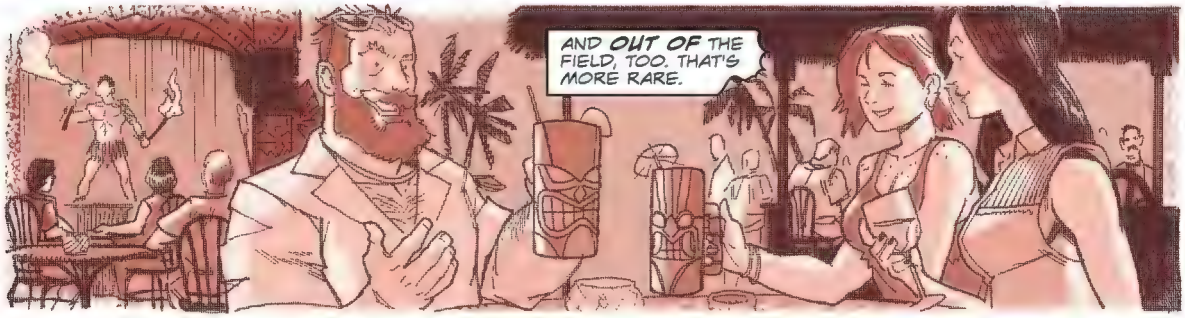

BECAUSE IF HE KNOWS THAT A MISSING-IN-ACTION MILITARY ASSET HAS BEEN LOCATED, THEN THERE ARE TWO OPTIONS. HE KNOWS AND CARES AND HE SCREWS IT UP AND SHE NEVER COMES HOME.
OR...OR HE KNOWS AND HE DOESN'T CARE AND THEN SHE STILL NEVER COMES HOME, BUT I ALSO HAVE TO SERVE A LIFE PRISON SENTENCE FOR MURDERING HIM.
DRAMATIC.
YEAH. MAYBE.
YOU TWO WERE CLOSER THAN YOUR FILES SUGGEST.
JINX WA-- SHE IS LIKE A SISTER TO ME.
THEN I TAKE IT SHE'S THE ONE WITH THE GREEN THUMB?
I'M DOING MY BEST, OKAY?!

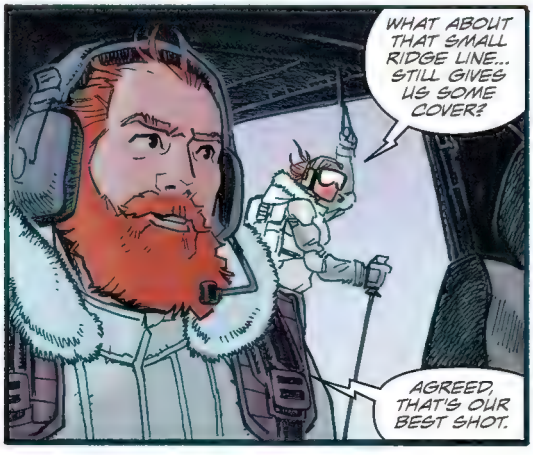
FOUR YEARS AGO
I KNOW WE LIKED THAT SWANKY PLACE WITH THE ROOFTOP DECK DOWNTOWN, BUT OUT HERE...I COULD REALLY WORK WONDERS WITH THIS YARD.
YARD WORK? REALLY? THAT'S YOUR PITCH?
I MEAN, NO. BUT ALSO YES.
YOU'RE A TERRIBLE SALESMAN.
BARBECUES! WE'LL HAVE AWESOME SUMMER BARBECUES.
BETTER. WHAT ELSE YOU GOT?
THERE'S ROOM FOR AN ARCHERY SET UP.
BINGO.
DON'T YOU MEAN BULLSEYE?
=GROAN=

THANKS FOR LETTING ME TALK ABOUT HER. I DON'T GET TO DO THAT MUCH.
TELL ME ABOUT THE SYMBOLS.
IT'S...IT'S JUST A LITTLE CODE WE DEVELOPED OVER THE YEARS. STARTED OUT MORE AS A WARNING SYSTEM...BUT IT GREW TO SOMETHING MORE.
THERE'RE CODES ALL OVER THE HOUSE...IF YOU KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR.
AND THE CODE YOU SAW IN MONACO?
"ROUGHLY TRANSLATED? DON'T FOLLOW ME."
AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IGNORING THAT?
I'M LISTENING.
NOBODY WILL TALK TO YOU ABOUT JINX BECAUSE SHE WENT MISSING WHILE TRYING TO INFILTRATE CLAN ARASHIKAGE, A RISING POWER IN THE GLOBAL ARMS RACE.
BUT IT'S TIME TO MAKE OUR MOVE.

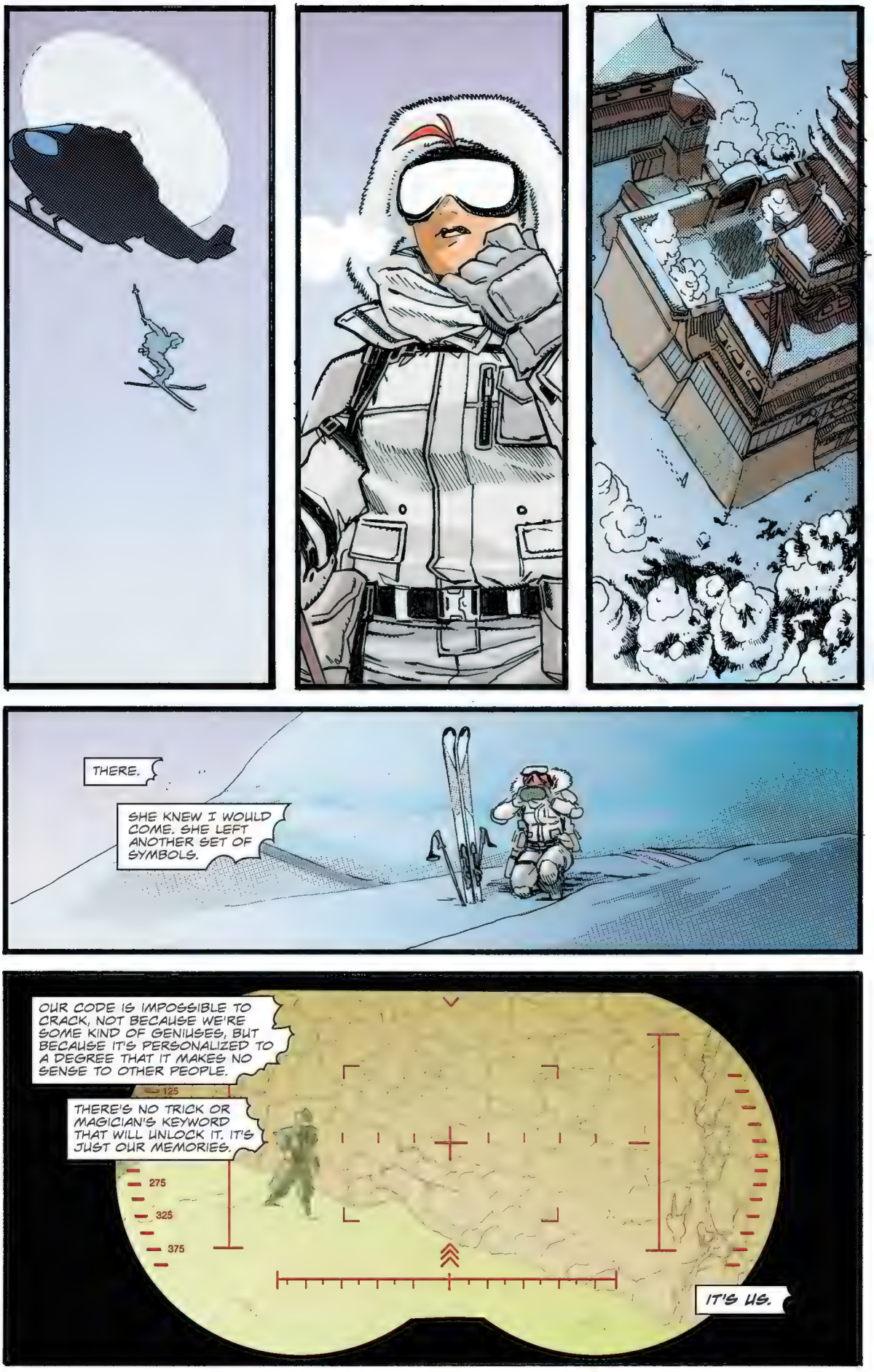

HARLAN MOORE, A.K.A. SNOW JOB.
'BOUT TEN MILES OUT, SCARLETT. IF WE COME FROM BEHIND THE MOUNTAIN, THEY'LL HEAR US AT THIS DISTANCE.


I ACTUALLY KNOW HARLAN. HE GOT ME AND JINX OUT OF A TOUGH SPOT ONCE. GOOD GUY IN THE FIELD.


AND OUT OF THE FIELD, TOO. THAT'S MORE RARE.


WHAT ABOUT THAT SMALL RIDGE LINE... STILL GIVES US SOME COVER?
AGREED, THAT'S OUR BEST SHOT.

YOU SEND ME THE SIGNAL, I'LL COME FOR YOU. NO MATTER WHAT.
THANKS, HARLAN. LET'S HOPE IT DOESN'T COME TO THAT.
HAPPY HUNTING.


THERE.
SHE KNEW I WOULD COME. SHE LEFT ANOTHER SET OF SYMBOLS.
OUR CODE IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CRACK, NOT BECAUSE WE'RE SOME KIND OF GENIUSES, BUT BECAUSE IT'S PERSONALIZED TO A DEGREE THAT IT MAKES NO SENSE TO OTHER PEOPLE.
THERE'S NO TRICK OR MAGICIAN'S KEYWORD THAT WILL UNLOCK IT. IT'S JUST OUR MEMORIES.
125
275
325
375
IT'S US.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP WITH THE KOI POND.
I WILL TAKE MY THANKS IN TRADE. HELP ME SET UP THE ARCHERY STUFF NEXT WEEKEND?
DEAL.

WHAT ABOUT THIS?
HMMM. NOT TWO OR PEACE. MAYBE...BUNNY RABBIT?

NOT SURE HOW OFTEN WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT BUNNY RABBITS IN OUR BUSINESS.
I STILL HAD TO MAKE THE JOKE.
FAIR.
GIMME A SEC... WAIT. I GOT IT.

"LOOK."
YES!

MMM. DO YOU THINK IT'S TOO OBVIOUS?
ONLY TO US. AS INTENDED.

HERE'S TO BEING WEIRD NERDS WITH TOO MUCH TIME ON THEIR HANDS.
MAY IT ALWAYS BE THUS.
K&Q
BEER

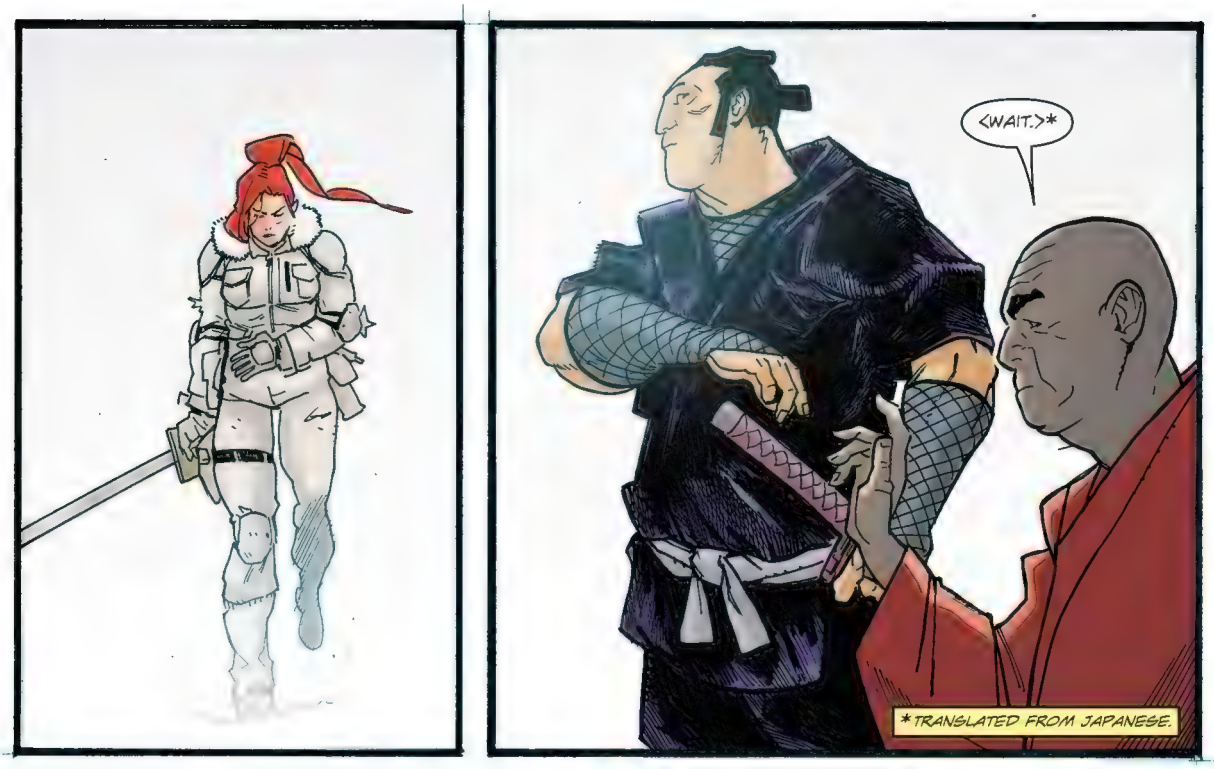
WHAM
SLICE
SLIIIICE
KRAK

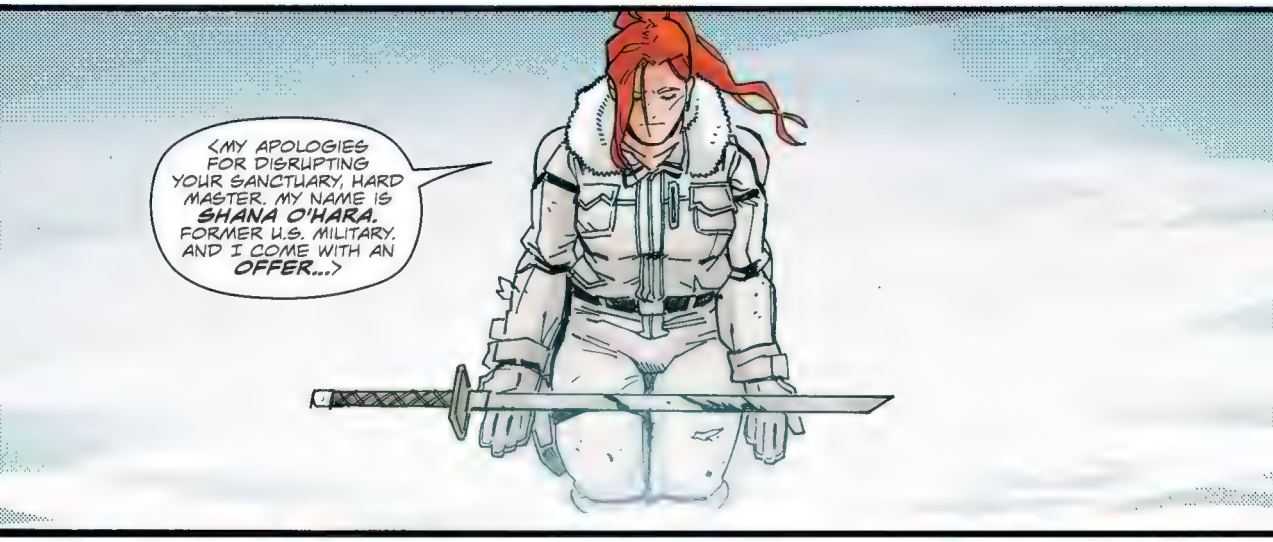
HRKKK
THUNK

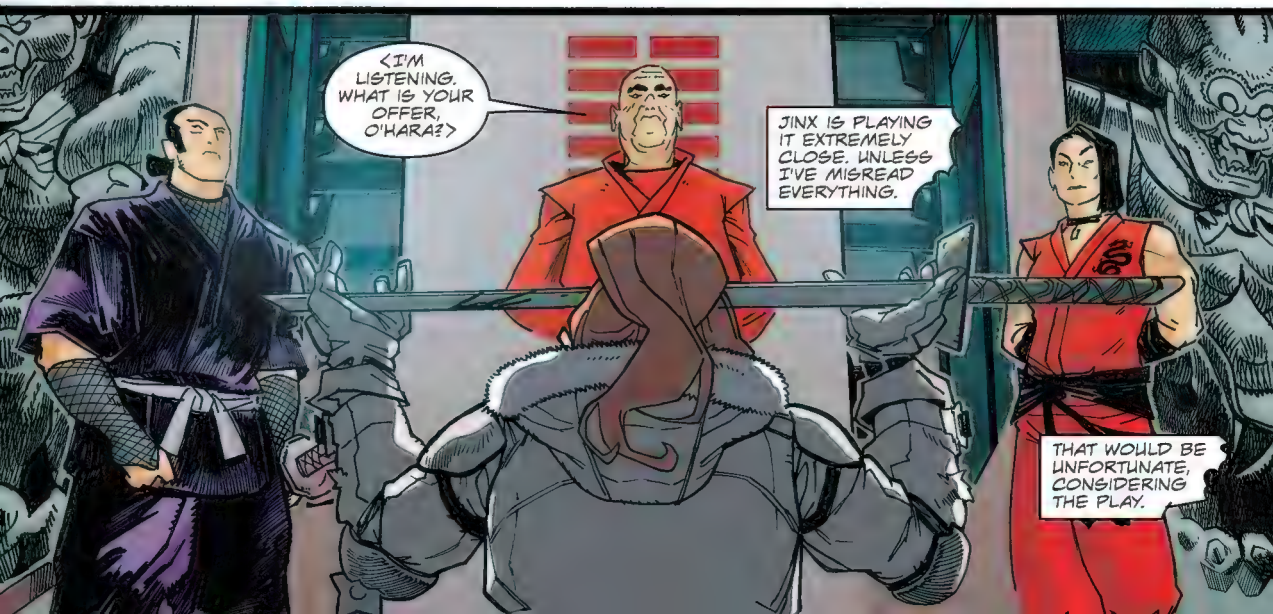
THERE SHE IS. IT...SHE LOOKS GOOD.
GOD. DON'T LOSE IT NOW, SHANA. LOCK IT UP. MILES TO GO BEFORE YOU SLEEP.
SHE LOOKS VERY... COMFORTABLE. BUT SHE'D HAVE TO OR SHE'D BE LONG DEAD.
BIT TOO LATE FOR SECOND THOUGHTS.
WHO WANTS A LONG FULFILLING LIFE ANYWAY?
<EN GARDE?>

KICK
GRAAAGH
SLICE
SQUICK
=GROAN=
CLANG
HNNNNG!

HNNNG!
WHOOMP
SLUICE
KRAK
=GROAN=
NOW FOR THE HARD PART.


<WAIT.>*
*TRANSLATED FROM JAPANESE.


<MY APOLOGIES FOR DISRUPTING YOUR SANCTUARY, HARD MASTER. MY NAME IS **SHANA O'HARA.** FORMER U.S. MILITARY. AND I COME WITH AN **OFFER...**>


<I'M LISTENING. WHAT IS YOUR OFFER, O'HARA?>
JINX IS PLAYING IT EXTREMELY CLOSE. UNLESS I'VE MISREAD EVERYTHING.
THAT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE, CONSIDERING THE PLAY.

SO WHY ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE OTHER THAN ME INTERESTED IN BRINGING JINX HOME AFTER OVER TWO YEARS MISSING?
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT'S ENTIRELY ACCURATE. BUT I SEE YOU'VE BEEN MAKING REQUESTS--
ALL DENIED. TO A ONE.
SO WHY NOW? WHY YOU?
I HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE WITH CLAN ARASHIKAGE. I WAS TRAINED THERE...IN PART.
AND I PUT THIS MISSION TOGETHER, SMALL THOUGH IT IS.
BUT I WANT YOU GOING IN EYES OPEN, SHANA. SHE'S AN ASSET WE TRAINED, AND YES, WE WANT HER BACK. BUT IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT HER.
WHAT ELSE IS IT ABOUT?
THERE'S ALSO A WEAPON.
OF COURSE. THERE'S ALWAYS A WEAPON.
I'M AFRAID THAT'S TRUE.
SO WHAT'S THE PLAY?
I'D ALMOST GIVEN UP HOPE OF TRYING THIS, SHANA. BUT JINX SIGNALING YOU, EVEN TO TELL YOU TO STAY AWAY, THAT'S A BIG BREAK. IT'S CONFIRMATION THAT THERE'S AN ALLY INSIDE.
YOU STILL HAVEN'T SAID--
IT'S JUST YOU AND A PILOT. SNOW JOB DROPS YOU OFF, YOU FIGHT YOUR WAY IN ON YOUR OWN...AND THEN MAKE ARASHIKAGE AN OFFER IT CAN'T REFUSE...
U.S department
CONFIDENTIAL

<THE OFFER IS... ME.>
<DO I NEED YOU, GAIJIN?>
<IT SEEMS, PERHAPS YOU DO.>
HE'S NOT TAKING THE BAIT. I MIGHT BE IN REAL TROUBLE HERE.
S#@%.
!?!

<THANK YOU, STORM SHADOW.>
<OF COURSE, HARD MASTER.>
<I LIVE TO SERVE.>
NEXT: THE LION'S DEN

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO
[redacted]
GIJOE@SKYBOUND.COM

People love characters. I see it over and over and over again - whether it's comics, novels, television, film, or even video games - it's the characters they fall in love with.

And Scarlett is a hell of a character. I think she imprinted on a whole lot of us when we were young in an indelible way. For me personally? She was one of the very first characters I ever fell in love with.

So to get the chance to carve an exciting new path for her in a bold new universe, was a dream - and also a bit terrifying - when you care that much about the underlying character the stakes feel… extra-large. Not only in successfully re-creating something people love, but in adding real and lasting value to it.

It's incredible that Skybound and Hasbro wanted a SCARLETT series to be one of the debut series of their new universe, because it speaks to recognizing the popularity of Scarlett and the importance of getting her right. And also the importance of showing the world from her perspective at formative time for both Scarlett and for G.I. Joe. By letting Scarlett be one of the first Joe stories in this universe, Skybound and Hasbro were asking us to make Scarlett a keystone to all G.I. Joe. And it's an honor to try to tell that story.

Meeting Scarlett for the first time, but in a whole new way, is powerful stuff. So we tried our best to take everything that made Scarlett so beloved already and poured her into an entirely new adventure (a suicide mission, naturally) that explored the core of what makes Scarlett tick - that awesome intersection between hero, action star, friend, and ally.

So I hope what readers will find inside these pages is a character they've always loved given a slightly new angle and a focus she's rarely seen before. I hope they also find a badass story full of high-octane action, impossible odds, lost friends, new enemies, old allies, and the whole Energon Universe beginning to open up before one of the coolest characters in the franchise.

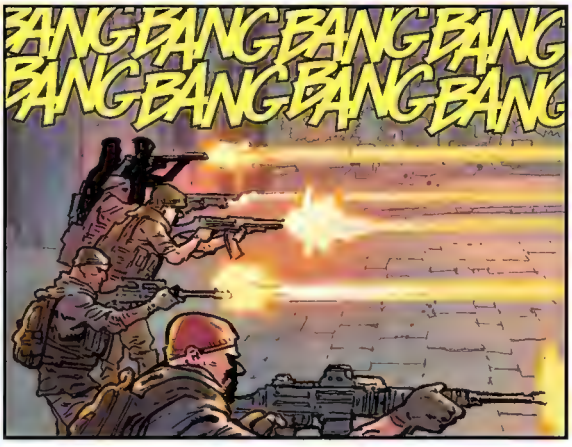
I'd end with "GO JOE!" but that feels a bit much… right? ;D

Kelly Thompson
April 2024
Portland, OR

THE REVOLUTION IS CANCELLED, I'M AFRAID, BOYS AND GIRLS--ON ACCOUNT OF YOUR VASTLY INFERIOR FIREPOWER.
UH, WHO THE HELL IS THAT?

BATTLE ANDROID TROOPER
[ADVANCED PROTOTYPE]
HEAT SIGNATURE TARGETING SYSTEM
MODULAR GATLING ARM CANNON (SUBSTITUTABLE)
LOGIC CIRCUITRY (PROTOTYPE)

CH-CHK


BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG

TSH
TSH
TSH
TSH
TSH
TSH

HOW IS IT STILL STANDING?
WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
OH, GOD! UP THERE...

"...THERE ARE MORE INCOMING!"

I TOLD THEM TO SHOOT TWO OR THREE OF THEM.
BOYS WILL BE BOYS, I SUPPOSE.
FALL BACK! BACK TO THE PALACE!
WE'RE OVERRUN! THEY AREN'T HUMAN! THEY'RE MACHINES!
IT--IT CAN'T BE HIM. GET ME OUT OF HERE!
IT'S TOO LATE.
THEY HAVE BREACHED IT! THE PALACE IS BEING LIBERATED!
SUPPORT THE EMANCIPATORS!
TEAR DOWN THE THRONE OF POWER!
IT... IT IS HIM. GET ME A DIRECT LINE.

DARKLONIA IS FREE!
PEACE
BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG
WE DESERVE PEACE
LAIRD DESTRO.
THE DARKLONIAN PEOPLE ACCEPT YOUR RESIGNATION, PRIME MINISTER.

THE COBRA THREAT CONTINUES
DESTRO
Superstar writer DAN WATTERS (Universal Monsters: Creature From the Black Lagoon Lives!) and acclaimed artist ANDREI BRESSAN (Dark Ride) change the balance of power in the Energon Universe forever!
ON SALE JUNE 19, 2024
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WELCOME TO THE ENERGON UNIVERSE

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